

HOW CAN THE ARTS HELP EDUCATION BUILD A WHOLE CHILD FOR TOMORROW?

Aesthetic - develop a view of personal taste and perspective

Aesthetic experiences are defined as sensory, emotional and cognitive experiences with the natural and human-made world. The traditional sense of the term focuses on the recognition of beauty in arts and nature; however, contemporary philosophers define any artistic expression as aesthetic to someone. The aesthetic sense is recognizing the subtle and obvious presence and organization of elements such as balance, contrast, rhythm, etc. that make up the meaning of the whole. As children develop a personal aesthetic view it becomes a lens through which they view the world and make meaning from it. Experiences with the arts can help sensitize individuals to the deeper meaning contained in all they experience, learn about and produce. (Barrett, Evans, Lansing)

Emotional - gain trust, respect and confidence in self and others

Emotional development and emotional intelligence have become increasingly significant as we learn more about how children become successful learners and individuals. We are often reminded that success in life depends on both rational and emotional intelligence. Emotional development is critical to self-motivation, ability to persist, impulse control, delayed gratification, mood regulation, empathy and hope. (Salovey, Mayer, Goleman)

Spiritual - recognizes and demonstrates the human desire to connect to causes and ideas bigger than self

Research supports the idea that personal spirituality is an important contributor to knowledge construction, meaning making, and the development of identity formation and self-awareness, and that the arts can be an important means for reintroducing discourse on spirituality into schools. This approach transcends the issues of religion, and focuses instead on the innate spirituality found in humans in all cultures and times. (Cameron, Gamwell, Kandinsky, Mayes, Thayer)

Intellectual - recognizes and uses patterns and concepts to make sense of their world toward the development of wisdom

Recent discoveries about the human brain show that it is designed to learn from the complexity of the natural world. It does this by detecting patterns found in clues it receives through vision, hearing, touch and other senses. The development of the human intellect depends on actual real-world experiences that equip the brain to detect, recognize, and use patterns to solve problems, navigate life, and contribute to society. (Hart, Schellenberg)

Social - demonstrate positive attitudes and behaviors toward and with others moving toward altruism

Infants show the beginnings of social development as newborns as they bond with primary caregivers (mother, etc.) and begin to interact with their environment and other people. Social skills have been shown to be important to overall success in school and the workforce. Social interactions help to fine-tune both language and cognitive development. The arts have been shown to be powerful tools for helping children to gain and improve personal confidence and social interactions. (Burton, Oden, Wheeler)

Physical - demonstrate increasing refinement of both gross and fine motor skills

Children learn through their senses and physical experience with the world. Physical experiences help them to integrate emotional and cognitive circuitry in the brain. Additionally, through physical experiences and especially play, children learn about themselves and their surroundings. Moving and growing make up much of a young child's life and for young children especially, movement and physical experience provide the foundation for higher-level cognition through integration of the brain's sensory association areas.

(Doherty & Bailey, Healy, Marcon)

Whole Child

Natural Progression Pattern Sequence

The development of the whole child or whole person extends beyond the school experience and reflects a balanced and enriched life supported in many environments.

The elementary fine arts core is designed to support the development of whole individuals as it encourages them to develop and refine aesthetic, intellectual, emotional, social, spiritual and physical dimensions through the process of experiencing, exploring, applying, analyzing, creating, and sharing the arts.

- Experience/Identify
- Explore/Contextualize
- Apply/Build Skills
- Analyze/Integrate
- Individualize/Expand
- Refine/Contribute

